

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 140

By Tracy

A RESOLUTION to commend and honor Marissa Countess on her meritorious service to the citizens of this State.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this General Assembly to recognize those estimable individuals who devote themselves to charitable works, thereby advancing the public good; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is high school junior Marissa Countess, a precocious young lady whose desire to serve those with disabilities in Bedford County led her to found the annual event "Shining Stars"; and

WHEREAS, the aptly named Shining Stars is an opportunity for young ladies with disabilities to shine; after a day replete with having her hair, nails, and makeup done, each lady dons a dress of her choosing and makes a grand entrance on a runway, where she is cheered by an on-looking crowd of admirers; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Countess created Shining Stars to honor young ladies with special needs and to show them the respect of which they are so deserving; in a world that often lacks empathy and defines those with disabilities by what they cannot do, Ms. Countess wanted to recognize these young ladies and highlight their intrinsic value and abilities; and

WHEREAS, Shining Stars serves a dual purpose: it is a special night for those young ladies with disabilities in Bedford County, and it is also a fundraiser, with the proceeds benefiting the New Life School for children with disabilities in Guatemala. In 2015 and 2016, the event raised over \$14,000 for the school; and

WHEREAS, eager to make a broad impact and inspire others to serve, Marissa Countess has rallied other high school students to help make a difference in both Bedford County and Guatemala; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Countess has devoted herself to serving those with disabilities, proving that, regardless of one's age, individuals can put compassion into action and make a positive impact on the world; and

WHEREAS, Marissa Countess embodies the spirit of volunteerism that is synonymous with this State, and it is fitting that she be recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby commend and honor Marissa Countess on her meritorious service to those with disabilities in this State and throughout the world, extending our sincerest wishes for much success and happiness in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.